View metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.uk
brought to you by CORE

WESLEY STACE'S *MISFORTUNE* AS THE NEO-VICTORIAN NOVEL: WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BALLADS

Yui Nakatsuma

Misfortune (2005), the first novel by the author and singer, Wesley Stace, is set in Victorian England. It interweaves a range of past literary texts such as Greek myths, Victorian social documents, and the twentieth-century theories. The novel opens with a scene in the poorest and most miserable district in Victorian London: a boy ballad singer, Pharaoh, runs towards "a crooked house" (3) at the heart of the London slums to announce that the relatives of the Lovealls are approaching to take the life of a descendant of the family, whose mother is now giving birth to a newborn baby secretly in the house. The baby is discarded into a dust hill, and is rescued by Geoffroy Loveall almost immediately afterwards, who brings him up as a girl. A central element of the story, which starts from within the "crooked" house, is Rose's "crooked" sex. The scene in which Geoffroy discovers his "daughter" is observed by Pharaoh. The ballad he composes recounting the scene saves Rose's life in the latter part of the story. Although the whole story takes place ostensibly in the Victorian period, Rose's "crooked" sex is not the product of Victorian ideology but something that is based on ideas of gender and sexuality which developed over the course of the twentieth century. On the other hand, ballads had substantially disappeared in England by the end of the nineteenth century. This paper will explore how the lost literary form of popular ballads affects the "crooked" Victorian period as represented in the contemporary revisionist novel.

1. Neo-Victorian Novels and *Misfortune*

Misfortune belongs to a sub-genre of Neo-Victorian novels which are bent on distorting or "crooking" established images of the Victorian age. Such novels, which have been written since the mid-twentieth century, can be seen as products of the progress made in Victorian studies. The age has been controversial since the early twentieth century, when the modernists opposed Victorian ideology in part because they felt that their forefathers had hypocritically suppressed sexuality. The modernist era laid the foundation for the atmosphere of the present state of Victorian studies: they put themselves at a distance from the period as "the unknowable," according to Christopher Herbert. He states that the background to the contemporary view of the Victorian era was constructed in part by Virginia Woolf, who, in 1924, "offer[ed] another version of the same insistent myth of a radical discontinuity between the Victorians and us folk of the twentieth century" (33).[1] Even at that early date, the age was already felt to be far away. Lytton Strachey regarded, for instance, the Victorians as strangers; they have to be retrieved from "far depths" in *Eminent Victorians* (1918): "I have attempted . . . to present some Victorian visions to the modern eye" (xiii). From the early twentieth century onwards, the Victorians became more and more estranged as if they had lived in a sphere far removed from modern people. Simon Joyce asserts that the modernists dug their own graves by depending on binary opposition against Victorian people (11). Then, after the modernists' period, the 1960s saw changes in the field of Victorian studies such as Stephen Marcus's *The Other Victorians* (1966) and Raymond Williams's *Culture and Society* (1958). Marcus "is interested in those who don't fit within our received notions of the Victorians" (Joyce 5) by consideration of his studies of pornography. "The development of common culture" (318) of the Victorian era, which was ignored by the modernists, is brought to light by Williams. As a result, the complexity and variety of Victorian culture, including sexual perversion, have become the image in use today. The contem-

porary novels are greatly influenced by these changes in Victorian studies: beyond the disgust with Victorian spirit and the inquisitiveness about Victorian culture, they "crook" the period, which caused the foundation of the contemporary ideas and theories.

A new trend came into being in the 1960s when scholars began exposing little known aspects behind the established image of the past, which led to the production of "revisionary" fiction set in the Victorian era. The word "revision" was first employed by Adrienne Rich in her paper of 1971, written from the feminist point of view: "revision" was defined as "the act of looking back of seeing with fresh eyes, entering an old text from a new critical direction" (90). The searching eyes of Williams and Marcus, which detected voices hidden beneath the established picture, led to Rich's act with "fresh eyes." Then, these contemporary revisionary fictions are defined as novels which are considered to "'write back' to canonical texts of the English tradition" and to show "a challenge to any writing that purports to be 'telling things as they really are'" (501), according to Peter Widdowson. He names the act performed by these fictions as "writing back" and focuses on them as a "sub-genre" among "British contemporary fictions" from the 1970s (491): for instance, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) and *Foe* (1986) are the leading texts of this genre. Cora Kaplan, on the other hand, calls them "Victoriana":

> Today 'Victoriana' might usefully embrace the whole phenomenon, the astonishing range of representations and reproductions for which the Victorian—whether as the origin of late twentieth century modernity, its antithesis, or both at once—is the common referent. (3)

Kaplan, who deals with the fictions of the 1960s and the 1970s, argues that Victoriana "override[s] both modernism's critique of the hollowness of that purpose and postmodernism's default cynicism" (95). The acts of "crooking" in these fictions of Victoriana overturn not only the Victorian past but also the modernists' obvious disagreement and the

disclosure of the era's establishment and their images, with their "fresh eyes."

The present century is seeing the flourishing of studies in this field of British literature. In 2008, a journal treating this area, *Neo-Victorian Studies*, was inaugurated. The "Introduction" of the academic journal states that "over the last two decades, the production of neo-Victorian artefacts, fictions, and fantasies has become too prolific to be contained as a ghost in the corner of the Victorian Studies parlour . . ." (Kohlke 1). Similarly, *Literature Interpretation Theory*, whose introduction was titled "Engaging the Victorians," issued a special edition of the Neo-Victorian study in 2009. There, Munford and Young assert that the Victorian characteristics, which have been researched during the twentieth century, have been already established as a "consensus" (4). Neo-Victorianism itself is required to re-estimate the past (Munford and Young 4) beyond the boundaries established in the development of twentieth-century Victorian studies. *Misfortune*, as one example of Neo-Victorian fictions, can be considered as overwriting previously established canonic views of the period in which it is set.

What makes it possible for the novel to "override" the previous academic studies of the Victorian era? To answer this question, Kaplan's study on sexuality may be worth quoting.

> If Victorian sexuality, has been the dominant theme for narrative Victoriana in literature, film and theatre it has not simply taken the form of exposing the repressed and repressive Victorians as hypocrites obsessed with sexuality, nor, on the other hand does it necessarily confirm Michel Foucault's brilliant and influential inversion of the repressive hypotheses, which, at the end of the 1970s, argued that the proliferation rather than the suppression of the discourses of sex was what characterised the nineteenth century. (95)

Many critics, including Foucault and numerous fiction writers of the earlier twentieth century, such as Woolf and James Joyce, have demon-

strated their aversion to the suppression of sensuality and sexuality by the Victorians. In the modernist era, Victorian sexuality was at the heart of abhorrence of and assault on Victorian culture. Neo-Victorian novels seem to modify the modernist fixed attitudes against a sense of value of the previous period, and at the same time, the motivation for collapsing the "consensus" of the twentieth-century has led the proliferation of Neo-Victorian novels since the late twentieth century.

Misfortune is one such work treating Victorian sexuality as it is seen from a contemporary viewpoint. This is to say that the novel represents not the clichés of the Victorian suppressive discourse of sexuality but rather a diversity of sexuality. Indeed, Rose determines that her/his sex is neither female nor male after the term of her/his sufferings. Because of the protagonist's sensational sexuality, a number of critical essays have used queer theory in order to analyse the novel, basing such examination on the ideas of Judith Butler. For instance, Sarah Gamble asserts:

> Indeed, Rose embraces a determinedly indeterminate gender identity that preserves her as an icon of "gender trouble." And . . . *Misfortune* displays the process of the discursive formation of gender, . . . (136)

In a similar way, Emily Jeremiah brings Butler's *Gender Trouble* into her argument that the novel puts heterosexuality and the past words "in the service of queerness" (136). In *Gender Trouble*, Butler raises the question that, if "identity" is confirmed in a binary distinction of two sexes, "the person," who "fail[s] to conform to the gendered norms of cultural intelligibility," has no choice in identity construction (23). In short, it can be argued that Rose is "the person" and her/his life in the novel validates Butler's assertion of a proliferation of sex and gender, "confounding the very binarism of sex, and exposing its fundamental unnaturalness" (Butler 190).

Although *Misfortune* conforms to arguments on the grounds of

queer theory, what is peculiar to the novel amongst Neo-Victorian or Victoriana fictions is the use of ballads. Ballads are songs intended as a means of oral communication: prose has a different function because it is a written form. The Victorian period was a transitional epoch for the verbal forms of literary expression, as it saw a rapid spread of literary forms of popular culture within the general population along with the development of a culture of consumption. John and Jenkins argue, for instance, that the oppositional positions of the contemporary Cultural and Literary Studies have resulted from the cultural formation in the Victorian age: the "low" culture was categorised in a group for the populace whereas the traditional study of the "high" culture was viewed "from the academic telescope" (4–5). Then, they attempt to "demonstrate the continuities between the past and the present, the high and the low" (5). This aim seems to be effective in considering the use of ballads in *Misfortune.* The rest of the present paper will explore how ballads are introduced in this unusual Neo-Victorian novel.

2. History of Ballads and Popular Culture

Ballads, which underscore pivotal parts in the narrative of *Misfortune*, were part of the expansion of written expressions of popular culture in the nineteenth century: unlike popular literature, ballads were traditionally composed of vocal sounds. Ballads have a couple of forms which have undergone a number of transformations as time changes. In particular, the emergence of print and the habit of reading had an enormous effect on traditional forms of ballads. The rise of industrialism and urbanisation brought about improvements in education and literacy from the eighteenth century onwards, and the book market made rapid progress, especially in London, while "the world of print was indeed an elitist one, at least until the eighteenth century" (Barry 80). The early nineteenth century and the beginning of the Victorian era saw the crucial historical changes in popular culture. Juliet John notes that Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* published in 1837,

for instance, used popular culture as "ideological and moral vehicles" (142): such popular culture included "melodrama, court reports, romance, newspapers, Newgate narratives, etc" (142), which were published cheaply. *Oliver Twist* represents the overflow of popular culture into written one, which was previously somewhat elitist. She argues that the publication of *Oliver Twist* was influenced by the tide of written popular culture in the days:

> In 1837, the year that *Oliver Twist* appeared and Victoria came to the throne, the country was also in the midst of a cultural revolution. . . . The popularity of penny dreadfuls, cheap weeklies and the practice of 'extracting' and serialization in newspapers all played their part in forcing down book prices, a trend which led to a broader readership, and which continued until 1850. (129)

The year 1837, although the juncture cannot be clearly defined in an historical sense, is symbolic of "the midst of a cultural revolution" moving towards the age where popular literature will be dominant.

There are conflicting arguments about the chronological transformation of popular culture and the definitions of low and high culture. If, as generally said, "popular" or "ordinary" refers to the culture of those who are uneducated and illiterate, little access to the materials is available because such groups traditionally transmit their culture orally. On the other hand, there are written forms such as chapbooks, penny dreadfuls, serial newspapers and cheap weekly readings, which were intended for the general public.[2] According to Barry, popular culture had been "conceived as the pure residue of an earlier peasant world" (90) by the eighteenth century: thus, although there are a number of considerations with the association of popular culture with written literature, it can be argued that, in the nineteenth century, "there were many ways of bridging the gap between the literate and oral worlds, such as by reading newspapers or printed tracts aloud, or even singing published ballads" (Harris 18). In the popular culture of the Victorian period, both the literate and illiterate lived together, as

the low and the worlds are jumbled together in Dickens's novel.

Ballads are in part the foremost culture of the jumbled situation of popular culture. Their use varied age by age. As J. S. Bratton notes, there were three types of ballads in the Victorian era: "the traditional ballad," "white-letter broadsides," and "literary imitations" (4).[3] Traditional ballads, which are narrated in short ballad stanzas, have been orally passed down generations (Yamanaka iv) in such forms as folk songs. The first ones, printed on the "single-sheet white-letter broadsides" earlier and on the "three feet" sheets later, had been appearing from the sixteenth century and finally disappeared around the 1870s (Bratton 24). The second form, the "white-letter broadside," was sold in the London streets by the street-patterers: according to Henry Mayhew, they sold this type of ballad as "long songs" (221). Then, the revival of the ballad form by the English Romanticists, Wordsworth, Shelley, Byron and Coleridge, brought traditional ballads to academic attention (Bratton 17). Thus, an oral tradition was transformed into street songs and the later Romantic literary ballads, and this division continued into around the nineteenth century.

In *Misfortune*, Pharaoh's songs are sold in the form of broadside ballads, whose stories reflect social conditions and narrate sensational events. Because such ballads were printed on sheets, they had become a type of literature enjoyed by ordinary people. Ballads, "the earliest form of popular literature . . . as part-song, part-text," created a space where "any clear boundaries between oral and literate culture would have been blurred" (Barry 82). Perhaps caused by the progress and rise of cheap newspapers, journals, and readings, along with an improvement in the literacy rate during the Victorian period, street ballads disappeared rapidly after the middle of the nineteenth century (Bratton 13). The popularisation of literary culture led to the substitution of other written materials. The twilight of the ballad coincided with the internalisation of written culture.[4] Furthermore, whereas they were absorbed into written literature, ballads survived in music halls. In the 1840s, the social and political content of ballads, extemporaneously sung in streets, were adopted in the songs of the earlier

music halls: the commercialisation of music halls and their increasing popularity among people from various classes, however, gradually diminished the social elements of ballads (Bailey 128–130).[5] In short, the popularisation of cheap reading materials and the development of music halls, filled the void created by the disappearance of broadside ballads. The decline of ballads was superseded by the rise of the predominantly written culture from around 1840 to the 1870s in which street ballads were in the final stage of extinction.

3. The Worlds of Orality and Literacy in *Misfortune*

It should be noted that ballads in Victorian popular culture highlight something remarkable about *Misfortune* among contemporary Neo-Victorian novels. In the year 1837, in "the midst of a cultural revolution," when the Victorian age started and *Oliver Twist* was published, Rose leaves Love Hall partly in order to be driven by the Osberns, who attempt to usurp Rose's position as the head of the Lovealls, and partly to discover her/his subjectivity during her/his trip like the heroes of Victorian *Bildungsromans.* Furthermore, when the narrator, Rose, explains her/his birth from an adult point of view, s/he is highly conscious of the passing of time and the changes to written culture from the time when s/he was born: "Many years have passed since the events of 'Anonymous'" and "Novels have changed. Spelling has been mostly standardised, or standardized. There have even been improvements in punctuation" (78), s/he narrates.

"Anonymous" is the title of the first section of the novel, in which the omniscient narrator describes Pharaoh going to the heap of dust and excrement to discard the swaddled baby and watching the carriage of the Lovealls picking it up, along with the life of the Young Lord, Geoffroy, and his sister, Dolores. The events take place in a time when the works of popular culture were anonymously composed, as noted previously. This is to say that the years prior to Rose's life are situated as the period of traditional ballads in the novel. Although many people were able to read and write in 1820, the main character Pharaoh in the

opening of the novel is illiterate, and lives within "a long song cycle of his own devising" (8): he exists as an envoy of the oral or anonymous age.

The world of oral culture is different from that of the printed word. The songs and ballads produced in the non-literate world fundamentally rely on remembering and forgetting, according to Goody and Watt (307): they do little to recognise "the perception of the past except in the terms of the present" (310). The society which bases cultural transmission on an oral tradition is partly conscious of the sense of the continuous present time. The literate societies keep, on the other hand, "a more objective recognition of the distinction between what was and what is" (311) because the writing encloses and preserves the passing events on papers. The sense of "distinction" in terms of time causes everything to be distinguished. Walter Ong makes an argument about this difference in *Orality and Literacy* as follows: ". . . in functionally oral cultures the past is not felt as an itemized terrain, peppered with verifiable and disputed 'facts' or bits of information. . . . Orality knows no lists or charts or figures" (98). When Rose feels her/himself "surrounded by evidence" in her/his later life (78), it is possible to keep the past itself on papers in the literate world: evidences are "facts" which are collected around Rose from the previous events in order to establish her/his identity as the heir of the Lovealls. To sum up, in a way, whereas written texts create distinction between times and things, the oral world has a culture of non-distinction and a sense of continual present.

Rose lives in the age of written popular culture during the Victorian era, wrestling with it during her earlier life from 1820 to 1839 until s/he settles in Love Hall again. Then, after suffering through identity confusion at the same time of her oral culture and the others' written world, the matured narrator Rose finds her/himself to be "surrounded by evidence" because "the world has changed" (78). S/he experiences the transformation from an orally transmitted cultural world to the dominance of the written word. In addition, even in her/his happy childhood life in Love Hall, Rose is enveloped by books

since s/he "learn[s] to crawl among the stacks" and Anonyma comes to believe that s/he is a creature born from the printed page (119).

Rose feels, however, that "[her/his] mother was happiest surrounded by her books and assumed that [s/he] would be, too" (119). It is implicit in this sentence that Rose is not "happiest" in such surroundings. In short, s/he places her/himself far from books. Furthermore, although Anonyma loves books, she vocalizes a ballad and continues telling her own story after she reads the written narratives when s/he lies on bed at night: "My mother softly sang me 'The Ballad of La Pucelle'" after the book called "*The Gallery of Heroick Women*" and she was often "lost in her own telling of a fairy story" (130). In the childhood world, within a great number of books, Rose's memory has her mother's spoken stories and sung ballads impressed upon it: "many of the stories I loved were never written down" (130). It can be argued that Rose tends to belong to a spoken world in Love Hall. Additionally, Rose's sense of time suggests that s/he has lived in the orally cultural world. As s/he explains her/his earliest life, the narrator Rose does not have any key to mark the changing of the seasons in her/his memory: "I have few of those chronological markers: only *before and after*. I depend on my mother's journal to place things" (171). Rose notices that the written diary of Anonyma marks the time of the events to supply her/his vague memory since s/he cannot clearly remember without a help of a change of address, semesters of school and hair styles in Love Hall (171). In short, s/he has experienced the state of the passing continuity of time, to which traditional ballads belong, in the majority of her/his childhood.

In addition to Rose's sense of continuity in her earliest life, although Anonyma chronologically marks events in her journal, the novel does not give the exact date of Rose's birth partly because s/he is secretly born and the accurate story of birth is kept form her/him. Even the official newspaper announcement to inform the birth of heir of Lord Loveall is inserted "without date": "In the best national newspapers, without date, carefully worded by Hamilton so as to be entirely true" (99). The paper filled by letters encloses and under-

scores the accuracy of events and times. Nevertheless, in the novel, the specific quality of written sheets is ignored. Accordingly, Rose can be said to spend her/his life in Love Hall, in the world of oral culture.

Now, Rose is brought up in the midst of ambiguous and hidden knowledge of her/his sex: this is because s/he is forced to suffer from the binary difference of physical formations of female and male, and her/his own sexuality. Her/his undistinguished and indeterminate sexuality is attuned to the condition of the continuity of time in Love Hall. As s/he has a sense of time in the spoken world, s/he is able to doubt the accuracy of written words through her/his body: s/he is profoundly sceptical of the definition of "sex" in a dictionary. This doubt conforms to the argument of Goody and Watt against the dominance of literate mediums: "There can be no reference to 'dictionary definitions,' nor can words accumulate the successive layers of historically validated meanings which they acquire in a literate culture" (306). While Rose is told to believe what is written in books and texts by Anonyma, the "gray area" that is present in written and fixed things, here in the dictionaries, leads her/him to suffer and conceive of a question, as s/he narrates that the dictionary does not inform the discomforting sense of her/his body and mind. This is why s/he is "confused" by the existence of the "gray area" in her/his own body (189).

The "gray area" specifically points to her/his sex, yet it might be said that Rose's subjectivity itself is engaged in it. At the moment when s/he is given birth to, the baby Rose is treated as an important piece of evidence for the heir of Love Hall for the Lovealls and their relatives: "I was unwanted at birth and thrown away, evidence best disposed of" (76). Rose's life is complicated by her/his existence because her/his body includes the condition of written culture through its existence of evidence whereas the surroundings and her/his character seek the undistinguished environment of oral culture. Rose unconsciously tackles with both the evidential body of nature and her undistinguished environment. Furthermore, Rose's mother conflates the oral and written worlds, in that the name Anonyma suggests the

anonymous era with continuity of time and her own self belongs to written books. The distortion partly causes Rose's suffering of undistinguished sex, synchronizing with the earlier, complicated nineteenth-century transformation from oral popular literature to the dominance of writings in the Victorian era.

The Neo-Victorian novel is conscious of the movement towards a literary form of culture during the Victorian era, and also demonstrates the risk of written words. This is because it represents letters as lifelessness rather than admiring their culture. What firstly drives Rose to exile her/himself are the three letters B-O-Y written on the drive, the library door and her/his bed (223–4) by Anstance, who abhors the unidentified child. Rose has gradually discovered the differences of bodies from Sarah and similarities with Uncle Edwig and Stephen. Nevertheless, s/he perceives the actuality of her/his body cathartically from these three letters: "My life had changed forever. . . . I understood the difference: women had everything hidden inside their bodies, folded inward, whereas men were exposed" (224). Written letters clearly define what human sex is and thrust the sense of distinction on Rose, who had previously been protected by a space which did not force her/him to draw such a distinction. After the event of these three letters, the relatives who opose Rose as a heir have gradually undermined Rose's position by their legal statements until she/he is ejected. A lawyer, Thrips, who is employed by the Osberns, is also symbolically given a nickname "Inky" (385): his "malefic machinations around the village [are] the subject of much unease" (386). Here, the ink, a tool of writing, is related to the vicious relatives. Due to them, Rose is obliged to be a male heir, since her/his masculinity is known to the public through newspapers. Then, all of the male clothes make her/him feel "constrained" (239). Such cruel events around Rose have taken place up to 1837. The symbolic year, when written literature was welcomed by popular culture and internalised into the minds of the non-elite, ordinary people, is spent fruitlessly by Rose due to letters, ink, and newspapers.

Although written culture is represented rigidly, it is notable that

the novel exposes the distortion of oral culture. As noted above, Geoffroy and Dolores drift within a flow of time in the era of the traditional ballads in Love Hall. They are isolated from ordinary society around Love Hall and even from their mother, who does not care for her children. In their limited spaces, they play games with dolls, "assigning them roles, having them talk in languages," and conversely Geoffroy even becomes Dolores's doll (51). Indeed, although Dolores dies, he is described as a doll-like-figure during all his life: ". . . his head lolled to one side like a rag doll" (231) and "he sat bolt upright in bed, as though a puppeteer had jerked suddenly on his invisible strings" (233). As a result of such lifeless playacting with dolls and their solitary environment, "they [have] no one else to play with, nor [do] they want anyone" (51). They do not categorise others or sexes into groups as dictionaries define, but their space does not admit others and protects them in their own safe, albeit sterile world like dull dolls. Accordingly, in the house of Love Hall without any "draughts" (64), they succeed in building a perfect house of cards which never collapses until Dolores falls out of a tree. The perfection without obstructive others distorts Geoffroy's perspectives so that he regards Rose as his absent sister Dolores and does never permit her/him to be a boy. In the novel, the oral world brings about a rigidly isolated, artificial space instead of a natural one which has no marks of distinction.

Another consideration of queer oral areas can be examined. After Rose and Anstance are driven to the Octagonal by their relatives, s/he helps her to arrange broadside ballads in groups. In 1837 when written culture enters Love Hall along with the Osberns, Rose escapes from her vicious relatives and buries her/himself in the world of ballads: "I could get lost in the ballads and I escaped into their rhymes. They took me to another world of romance, coincidence, everlasting love, and fate, a world where my father was still alive to me" (291). S/he feels relieved when her/his mother sings ballads, yet the works of Rose and her/his mother for ballads is to categorize the printed rhymes on broadsides. Because the change of forms of ballads adversely affects

their lives, Rose is forced to be in "a perverse pleasure" (291).

As does Geoffroy, who is isolated from society, Rose spends her/his childhood in the era of orality so that s/he remembers her/himself "surrounded by roses" (105) and "in the library on a rose-pattered mat, a small white fence around [her/him]" (106). Rose's life from the beginning is determined by her/his father's illusion of a "daughter" and Anonyma's belief in Mary Day who desires "the original perfection and fruitfulness of the imagined undivided sexuality" (97). Rose's adolescent suffering is caused by the result of her parents' unreasonable requests: partly excluding others in the time of orality and partly having obvious categories in the world with written words.

As this paper has argued, Rose, whose birth in the "crooked house" is overseen by Pharaoh, lives in a "crooked" past in the Neo-Victorian novel. In short, oral ballads during the Victorian period provoke the novelist to narrate the age in order to describe both the lost sense of orality and the ambiguity of written words. Therefore, the protagonist experiences both the world of the traditional ballads of the past and the new world of literary dominance. The Neo-Victorian novel, as a result, offers a possibility for various times to exist in the same moment, in contrast to the conceptions of the modernists and the twentieth-century scholars who have distanced themselves from the Victorian age. Thus, one can discover part of continuing human existence beyond the existing histories of ballads and Victorian studies of the twentieth century.

Notes

[1] Herbert refers to Woolf's essay, "Character in Fiction": she writes, "And when I will hazard a second assertion, . . . , to the effect that on or about December 1910 human character changed. . . . All human relations have shifted. . . . And when human relations changed there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics and literature" (38).

[2] Barry explores this problem of the distinction of high and popular culture in "Literacy and Literature in Popular Culture" (69–74).

[3] The types of ballads are also shown in Yamanaka's *Eikoku Balladshi Rokujussen*

[*Sixty English Literary Ballads*] (1–5).

[4] Walter Ong demonstrates that "the climactic linear plot" of detective stories, which are recognised to begin in 1841, proves the development of the mind "[interiorising] literacy" (144–7)

[5] For a detailed history of music halls, see Inose's *Daieiteikoku Wa Music Hall Kara* [*Music Hall in the British Empire*].

Works Cited

Bailey, Peter. *Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003. Print.

Barry, Jonathan. "Literacy and Literature in Popular Culture: Reading and Writing in Historical Perspective." *Popular Culture in England, c.1500–1850.* Ed. Tim Harris. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1995. 69–94. Print.

Bratton, J. S. *The Victorian Popular Ballad.* London: Macmillan, 1975. Print.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.* London: Routledge, 1999. Print.

Gamble, Sarah. ""You Cannnot Impersonate What You Are":Questions of Authenticity in the Neo-Victorian Novel." *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory* 20 (2009): 126–140. Print.

Goody, Jack and Ian Watt. "The Consequences of Literacy." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51.3 (1963): 304–345. Print.

Harris, Tim. "Problematising Popular Culture in England." Popular Culture in England, c. 1500–1850. Ed. Tim Harris. Handmills: Macmillan, 1995. 1–27. Print.

Herbert, Christopher. "The Golden Bough and the Unknowable." *Knowing the Past: Victorian Literature and Culture.* Ed. Suzy Anger. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 2001. 32–51. Print.

Inose, Kumie. *Daieiteikoku Wa Music Hall Kara* [*Music Hall in the British Empire*]. Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun Sha, 1990. Print.

Jeremiah, Emily. "The 'I' Inside 'Her'; Queer Narration in Sarah Water's *Tipping the Velvet* and Wesley Stace's *Misfortune*." *Women: a Cultural Review* 18.2 (2007): 131–144. Print.

John, Juliet and Alice Jenkins, eds. *Rethinking Victorian Culture.* London: Macmillan, 2000. Print.

John, Juliet. "Twisting the Newgate Tale: Dickens, Popular Culture and the Politics of Genre." *Rethinking Victorian Culture.* Ed. Juliet John and Alice Jenkins. London: Macmillan, 2000. 126–145. Print.

Joyce, Simon. "The Victorians in the Rearview Mirror." *Functions of Victorian Culture at the Present Time.* Ed. Christine L. Krueger. Ohio: Ohio UP, 2002. 3–17. Print.

Kaplan, Cola. *Victoriana: Histories, Fictions, Criticism.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2007. Print.

Kohlke, Marie-Luise. "Introduction: Speculations in and on the Neo-Victorian Encounter." *Neo-Victorian Studies* 1 (2008): 1–18. Print.

Mayhew, Henry. *London Labour and The London Poor.* Vol. 1. 1951. New York:

Dover, 1968. Print.
Munford, Rebecca and Paul Young. "Introduction: Engaging the Victorians." *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory* 20 (2009): 1–11. Print.
Ong, Walter J. *Orality and Literacy: the Technologizing of the Word.* London: Methuen, 1982. Print.
Rich, Adrienne. "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-vision (1971)." *Adrienne Rich's Poetry: Texts of the Poems: the Poet on Her Work: Reviews and Criticism.* Ed. Barbara Charlesworth and Albert Gelpi. New York: Norton, 1975. 166–177. Print.
Stace, Wesley. *Misfortune.* London: Vintage, 2005. Print.
Straychey, Lytton. *Eminent Victorians.* 1918. Westminster: Random House, 1999. Print.
Widdowson, Peter. ""Writing Back": Contemporary Re-visionary Fiction." *Textual Practice* 20.3 (2006): 491–507. Print.
Williams, Raymond. *Culture and Society:1780–1950.* Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985. Print.
Woolf, Virginia. "Character in Fiction." *Selected Essays.* Ed. David Bradshaw. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. 37–54. Print.
Yamanaka, Mitsuyoshi, ed. *Eikoku Balladshi Rokujussen* [*Sixty English Literary Ballads*]. Fukuoka: Kyushu Daigaku Shuppan Kai, 2002. Print.